

Berkshire Local History Association



**Newsletter No 131
September 2021**

Berkshire Local History Association Newsletter

Editor: John Chapman

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We ask all member societies and institutions to provide a short report on their activities for inclusion in the Newsletter. We are always interested in articles on other matters and notice of events likely to be of interest to our members.

Contributions should be e-mailed to:- newsletter [@blha.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@blha.org.uk) and arrive not later than the 15th of the month preceding publication (January, May and September) Word, Text or pdf copy is acceptable, but keep it simple and please do not use spaces or tabs to lay out presentations. Photographs and images should be sent separately but please include your society in the name of each photo.

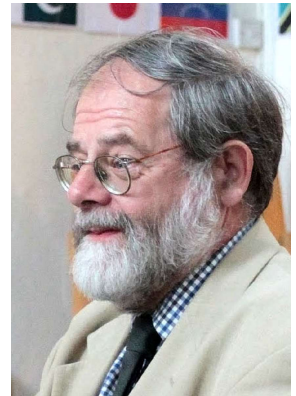
Alternatively material may be posted to the Editor: John Chapman, 5 Cecil Aldin Drive, Tilehurst, Berks, RG31 6YP

Cover picture -

Watlington House in the heart of Reading, home of the Mills Archive Trust (see page 13)

Chairman's Corner

Gradually, as libraries and record offices are able to re-open, people can get back to carrying out local history research, quizzing librarians and archivists, and maybe completing their projects. The University of Reading did not award the Berkshire History Prize this year, in no small part because much of the material the students would have needed was inaccessible for much of 2020.



It will be interesting to see what will happen in September, when local history societies traditionally re-start their programmes of talks. Will their members meet in person, or will “virtual” meetings continue, with people staying at home? And if meetings in person re-start, will people be happy to go out to join them? Will some societies try to do both, with simultaneous presentations, or presentations using recordings, or two presentations at different times, one in person and one “virtual”?

In June it was good to be able to join in an actual BLHA event, and to meet at Kintbury Station for a visit to the churchyard there and a walk to Hungerford, pausing in appropriate places to hear about the “Swing” Riots of 1830. An account of the day appears later in this edition. A good number joined the walk, and I think that everyone realised what they had been missing, and there was lively conversation. It was a happy event.

Those of our members who joined our “Zoomed” AGM or who read my summary of it in the May newsletter may remember that the Committee had been asked about bringing back the list of local history speakers and their talks, and putting it on the website. I’m sorry – there’s nothing to see yet, but I have to say that a small group of us have corresponded, met in person, and are looking at and trying out ways of gathering and displaying the information. The list is seen as a part of the BLHA’s *raison d’être* – giving out information, and putting people in touch with one another. This newsletter is of course another part of that work.

This small group met in a Reading coffee house earlier this week, and we ended up having a good conversation about what the BLHA was for, what our members and member societies wanted from us, and how to make the Association better known, especially to younger people who were likely to get their information via social media. It was the sort of conversation that

just doesn't happen on line. It cheered me and set me thinking - "Yes - the BLHA is worth supporting, and other people obviously think the same."

David Cliffe

A Word from the Editor

We are pleased to welcome a new society to our number - The Mills Archive Trust. Many of you will recall them hosting our AGM a few years back. They sent in a report to tell about themselves - see page 13.

We had some interesting items from societies we have not heard of for some time but then some of our regulars missed the deadline.



We particularly like to hear about public lectures and exhibitions but cannot reproduce posters. It makes it easier if, when you send in details, send them in this order - Title, Date and place, description (who is talking a bit about the topic etc) and finally how you book ahead if necessary or is it just turn up? Please don't capitalize phrases as we then have to retype them and it's too easy to get it wrong.

John Chapman

Articles

All our articles this time are taken from the Twyford and Ruscombe LHS Newsletters which contain many articles of general interest. Our thanks to Graham Starkie and the Society for permission to reproduce them.

The Round Table at Winchester

by Pauline Humphreys

Many years ago, as a young court reporter, I used regularly to attend the Assizes held at Winchester. As I sat in the Castle Hall, taking down the proceedings of the court held there, I was intrigued by the Round Table that hung on the wall, often referred to as King Arthur's Round Table - a table that weighed over a ton and was 18 feet in diameter. We are all aware of the legend of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, but why would this round table be hanging in the Great Hall at Winchester? Was it really a table? Had it belonged to King Arthur? If not, when was it made and why? Over many hours in court, this famous image (annotated "King Arthur") sparked my curiosity.

History tells us that the round table had hung in the hall for over 500 years. Restoration of the hall in the 1970s provided the opportunity for a minute examination of the table by leading scholars. First, a study of the woodwork established that it had once been a table. Secondly, evidence, supported by radiocarbon and tree-ring dating, showed that it was made between around 1250 and 1350. This demonstrated that the table had nothing to do with King Arthur; but was the table made for Henry III, Edward I, Edward II or Edward III? The latest surviving tree-ring on the planks of the tabletop grew in 1219 but the tree was probably felled no earlier than 1250 to 1265 and after felling there would be added time for seasoning and storing.

Edward I reigned from 1272 to 1307 and search of the Wardrobe Roll for 1289-90 revealed a major royal tournament held in Winchester on 20 April 1290, attended by the entire royal household, to celebrate the arrangements Edward had made for the betrothals of his children.

There has been much speculation about Edward's interest in King Arthur. It has been argued that Edward's second marriage to Margaret of France was followed by a feast and games in Arthurian style - although the account of these celebrations had been lifted 'word for word' from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*. Another source – it is a romantic adventure in an Arthurian mould – has been identified by RS Loomis: a rhyming history in Dutch by a Brabançon priest covering the years 1248 to 1316 which includes an elaborate account of a festivity called a Round Table, involving knights assuming the names of Arthur's knights of the Round Table and responding to challenges. While this account in no way reflects historical facts, the existence of the Round Table is the strongest argument that something of this kind may have taken place in Winchester Castle Hall.

The royal apartments were destroyed by fire in 1302 and doubtless, the events of 1290 receded from memory. The table seems to have stood in the Great Hall until 1348 when its legs were knocked off and the top hung on the wall. Investigation by X-rays demonstrated that the present design is the only one which has ever been painted on the table, and the design cannot be older than the start of the Tudor dynasty. Documents in the Public Record Office at Kew show that the table was repaired and painted in 1516. The face of Arthur on the table was originally painted in the likeness of Henry VIII – perhaps a piece of Tudor propaganda at a time when Henry had hopes of being elected Holy Roman Emperor.

The Origins of the BBC

by Lorne Clark

Over in the USA, regular radio broadcasting officially began on 21st December 1920 but back then there was little or no control over programme quality, hours of operation or even interference from adjacent stations. To avoid such chaos occurring in the UK, it was decided to put broadcasting in the hands of just one concern, the British Broadcasting Company. Its operation was subject to strict terms agreed with and policed by the Postmaster General.

The British Broadcasting Company Ltd was formed on 18th October 1922 and the first broadcast was from station 2LO, transmitting from Marconi House in London, although experimental transmissions had taken place from Chelmsford in 1919/1920.

The British Broadcasting Company Ltd., was formally registered on 15th December 1922 and by the end of that year over 35,000 receiving licences had been issued.

Note that in those early days the BBC was a Company – formed from numerous concerns such as Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Co. Ltd., The General Electric Co. Ltd., British ThompsonHouston Co. Ltd., and many, many others (2153 in all!). It is now of course the British Broadcasting Corporation.

From the start, the Company kept a list of all its member firms and, in an attempt to protect British-manufactured products from foreign competition, each firm was allowed to apply the BBC trademark to its products, in return for a Royalty payment. An example of such a trademark was applied to a General Electric 'GECophone' crystal set:

Such a crystal set would have attracted a 7 shillings and sixpence royalty, whilst a large valve set would have cost 1 pound 15 shillings and sixpence in royalties. The British Broadcasting Company Ltd. became a Corporation in 1926. So 2022 will see the centenary of the original Company. Might the BBC mark this in some way?

References/credits:

Shareholders of the British Broadcasting Company by Lorne Clark published by BVWS Books,

Book Reviews

Hungerford Overseers Papers 1655-1834

Edited by Peter Durrant ISBN 978-0-9573937-8-3

If you want some bedtime reading this book is not for you - although the 38 page introduction is a good read.

In contrast to many other of the volumes in the Berkshire Record Society collection this draws its information from a variety of sources ranging from David Stafford's unpublished MPhil thesis through quarter session records to Hungerford Parish Vestry Books. The effect of this is to tell many sides of the same story covering such topics as settlement, apprenticeships, vagrancy, bastardy and lots more.

One source needs a particular mention. This is the 'Attorney's Invoices' as they give a brand new view on the management of relief

There is a nice mixture of calendaring to cover all the information and transcription to give a sense of the time the material was produced. In all there are 1451 items with several appendices and excellent indexes to persons, occupations and places.

Although this is focussed on Hungerford many people from outside the parish feature in its pages and this will be a new source for anyone studying the Poor Law generally giving a new insight into the way it worked as it transitioned from a purely parish affair to one concerning a much wider community.

Copies can be obtained from Peter and cost £25 plus £3 p&p. Send a cheque made out to 'Berkshire Record Society' to Dr Peter Durrant, 84 Beech Lane, Earley, Reading, RG6 5QE.

John Chapman

Henry I and his Abbey

by Lindsay Mullaney

We know that King Henry founded his great monastery at Reading 900 years ago. But who was Henry and why was his 35-year reign regarded as a golden age by contemporary chroniclers, such as William of Malmesbury, Orderic Vitalis and Henry of Huntingdon?

Local researcher and lecturer Lindsay Mullaney has spent many years seeking the answers to these questions. Her new book, launched as part of Reading Abbey's 900th anniversary celebrations, makes fascinating reading. It is based on the accounts of the chroniclers, and is aimed the general reader, as well as historians. It is written in narrative form, with frequent quotations from contemporary accounts.

The book is richly illustrated throughout its nearly 250 pages with around 100 colour pictures, plus maps and family trees.

The book is available at £18, when ordered direct from the author.

To order please contact Lindsay Mullaney, at ALMullaney@aol.com or by phone 0118 9470 478. The book can be collected from her home address, 29 Derby Road Caversham, or sent by post, with an additional £2.00 for p&p.

It is also available from Reading Museum and bookshops, at the full price of £25

A Tale of Two Towns

Callewa and Reading The people of Reading from the earliest times to 1121.

by John Mullaney

Have you ever wondered how far back we can trace the history of Reading? Do we really know why it is called Reading? What was it like when King Henry I, son of William the Conqueror, decided to found a monastery, his mausoleum, in Reading? Did you know that the first time the name of Reading is mentioned was only in 871?

In this book John Mullaney looks at the various excavations and historical records of early Reading, including the Bronze and Iron Ages. He moves on to the Roman era and the dominance of Callewa. Following this, he discusses how, and why, with the 'decline and fall' of Rome, and the arrival of the

Saxons, Reading replaced the ancient Roman town.

The book also examines the various theories generated by the study of these events. This leads to some controversial points, such as the very origins, and meaning, of the name of Reading.

This is the first time an attempt has been undertaken to draw together, and critically examine, the various strands of evidence concerning the history of the two towns before 1121 and the founding of the monastery by Henry I.

The book has over 140 pages with more than forty maps and illustrations. It is available at £12, when ordered direct from the author. To order please contact John Mullaney, at JGMullaney@aol.com or phone 0118 9470 478.

The book can be collected from his home address, 29 Derby Road Caversham, RG4 5HE, or sent by post, with an additional £1.50 for p&p.

Cheques should be made out to 'John Mullaney'.

It is also available from Reading Museum and bookshops, at the full price of £18

John Chapman

Wartime Memories

Edited by Audrey Curtis

Our friends at the Twyford and Ruscombe Local History Society have recently published a new booklet entitled "*Wartime Memories*" - a collection of memories of the 1939-45 period. The 82 page book contains 37 personal reminiscences, arranged (literally) from A to Z by surname. They were all 'young people' at the time, and it is good that their recollections have now been preserved for posterity. They include the effects of bombing, of food rationing, of wartime entertainments, of having refugees billeted on the family, or of being evacuated, and of 'life in general' at that time. Although the contributions were written by people who now live in the local area, they were not necessarily in Berkshire (or even the UK – some accounts are from people who were in occupied Europe) during the war, so it is a fascinating mixture of memories that will be of interest to local historians where-ever they are. The book is priced at a modest £5, and now that 'non-essential' retail has re-opened, copies can be obtained from Newberry's in Twyford, or by contacting the society via their website

Peter Delaney

Society Contributions

Berkshire Family History Society

Like many organisations, the society is eager to discover over coming months what regular face-to-face contact activities might safely be re-established. But, whatever that outcome, one thing is certain - online meetings and events are here to stay, and a stimulating autumn and winter programme is already in place for local supporters and those living further afield.

One pleasing feature of the past year is the steady growth in (virtual) attendances at meetings and events. Branch meeting audiences grew by 26 per cent over those of the last full year in which face-to-face meetings could take place. Numbers for online talks have grown by more than 50 per cent compared with pre-pandemic attendees for talks at The Centre for Heritage and Family History. Places at workshops and on courses are necessarily limited, but almost every one of these events quickly becomes fully booked.

This autumn, Berkshire Family History Society offers a rich programme of online courses, workshops, talks and other events for the benefit of local and family historians. Several of these - a further beginner's course in family history and a workshop on writing up your family history are two examples — reflect a strong, continuing public demand. Other highlights include a 10-session course exploring Georgian sources for Historians and talks on Caribbean ancestry and on the role of DNA testing in family history. (*see opportunities page 27*)

For those unable to join an original event, the society is making some meetings and events available later as edited video-recordings, viewable at leisure in the Members' area of the website. The first of these, Mixing DNA with a Paper Trail, is accessible now.

For a second year, the society AGM took place online in June, reflecting Covid-imposed restrictions. More than 70 members signed in, including some from North America, despite the 'counter-attraction' of England meeting Scotland in a European football competition that same evening. Following the election of several new faces, the trustee group is now at its maximum allowable complement and Catherine Sampson was elected as

society chairman for a further term, after a one-year break. A recording of the AGM remains available for members to view on the website.

Every historian has missed genuine face-to-face interactions with those who share their interests over the past 18 months. The society has sought to ameliorate any sense of isolation by providing a weekly email newsletter for members. Social media has a part to play here too and, as an illustration, membership of the Berkshire Genealogy group on Facebook is now close to four figures.

There is a new and very important society publication in the shape of the transcribed parish registers of Newbury, St Nicolas in fully searchable CD format. From the initial registers of 1538 into the 20th century, this publication fills a major gap for researchers seeking to access the records of one of Berkshire's historically significant towns. The project has been a substantial undertaking, given the size of this parish, the condition of some of its registers, and the legibility of many of their earliest entries (requiring special techniques to read them). Publication is the culmination of many years of dedicated work by transcribers and checkers alike. (These transcribed records are not yet available in data download form.) But almost 600 individual downloads are now available for Baptisms, Marriages, Burials and Monumental inscriptions for Berkshire parishes, with full details available on <https://shop.berksfhs.org>

The society is poised to launch a new complimentary online service for members - YourTrees. This brings together traditional members' interests and pedigrees into a collective dataset, enabling members not only to publish their family trees but also to create a permanent record of their research. The starting point is the submission of a compliant GEDCOM file. Where tree owners allow, other members may browse shared content for research purposes, collaborate in areas of mutual interest, and the society will preserve digital legacy copies of all trees provided. The new YourTrees service also ensures a secure back-up copy for individuals' primary data. (Researchers should always keep their original data safely and independently elsewhere, of course.) Find out more on <https://yourtrees.berksfhs.org>

The website - <https://berksfhs.org> - and the weekly *In Touch* email newsletter provide the very latest news of the society's activities.

Derek Trinder

Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group **(BIAG)**

Like so many groups, BIAG has had to continue our 2021 programme online. In April, we had a talk on *Tyler Pump and Crossley Engines at Abingdon County Hall* given by Ruth Weinberg. Ruth, a professional researcher, spoke with great enthusiasm about the history and the restoration in 2011 of Abingdon's municipal water pump and associated engines. She has written on this and other subject in the history of Abingdon: see www.Abingdon.gov.uk/partners/history. In the late 19th century, Abingdon had an increasing need for water supply and a plan was advanced to use the water from an artesian well under the County Hall by using the Tyler Pump and Crossley Engines to raise the water to the top of the building and to then let gravity provide the pressure to distribute the water. The machinery was installed in the building's basement and can still be viewed there today.

We learned of another restoration in May. Martin Buckland spoke to us on the history and restoration of *The Wilts and Berks Canal*. The canal had a short period of prosperity between 1817 and 1841, when it transported coal from the Somerset mines to Abingdon and surrounding areas, but the transport was mainly one-way which reduced its economic value. Then, like so many canals in Britain, it fell into decline as the railways prospered and it was formally abandoned in 1914. The abandonment meant that no maintenance took place on the waterway and the bridges, which could have become dangerous, were demolished. In 1977 the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust was formed with the aim of returning the waterway to a navigable state, and Martin, who was closely involved in the restoration work, spoke informatively on their activities using photographs and adding in many great personal anecdotes.

With restrictions being lifted on social interactions, BIAG has been able to combine the topics of our two latest talks for a summer outing in Abingdon, where both Ruth and Martin will show us the engines in the County Hall and walk part of the canal to see the restoration work that was carried out.

Outside of events, BIAG has been working with the archaeologists at

West Berkshire Council to find information on the contents of the village forge in Yattendon which is being put forward for planning consent. It was pleasing to have BIAG's wider country federation, the Association of Industrial Archaeology, find a specialist consultant who will be providing their services for free to help save the forge's integrity and the machinery and tools it contains.

More information on our programme of activities, membership and Berkshire's industrial heritage can be found on our website www.BIAG.org.uk.

Jo Alexander-Jones

Berkshire Record Office

Since the last article, we have opened up the self-service areas of the searchroom so you can now use microfiche/film, catalogues, indexes and library material. We are no longer closed in the middle of the day which means that visitors can book two sessions of up to three hours per week. These can be booked separately on different days, or on one day for a six hour session between 10 am and 4 pm. We hope to increase numbers on site in due course, but at the time of writing it remains at five visitors per day. If you would like to book a visit, please see our Visit Us pages on our website.

Our online exhibition "*Where Smooth Waters Glide: 250 years of caring for the River Thames*" is available online at: <https://thames250exhibition.com/>. It was created to celebrate the 250th anniversary of when the Thames Navigation Commission (later Thames Conservancy) first met on 9 May 1771. The Thames Conservancy ran the River Thames from its source until its tidal reach at Teddington. It built the locks, weirs and towpaths and was responsible for prosecuting people who polluted the water, for preventing flooding and for draining land around the river for agricultural or residential use, functions now covered by the Environment Agency and Thames Water. If you would like to find out more about the archives themselves, please see the D/TC catalogue which is available on our online catalogue: D/TC online catalogue.

We have been continually taking part in various social media campaigns, including the *History Begins at Home* campaign. The campaign began in 2020 in order to help people stay connected during the pandemic by talking about the past and sharing memories about anything from food to cars, to holidays and school days. It can be very beneficial to wellbeing and mental

health as well as being something fun to do with others. If you would like to find out more about the campaign and download question sheets on various topics, please see their website for details: History Begins at Home website.

Remember to keep an eye on our website and social media feeds on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram for all the latest information about the BRO.

Ivone Turnbull, Senior Archivist

Friends of Reading Abbey

We are now into our summer break, after an unusual but busy first half to this lockdown year. We are now planning for our 2021-22 year, which starts with our Annual General Meeting on Saturday 30 October, followed by our Autumn public lecture. These will be our first public events for 18 months, to be held at the Abbey Baptist Church in Abbey Square, in the Abbey Precinct. The AGM will start at 2.30pm, with doors opening at 2.00pm. (see Opportunities page 25)

The Ministry of Justice, which owns the Reading Gaol site, in June did not accept the Council's bid for the Gaol in the sum of £2.6M, and returned the site to the property market. The deadline for new commercial bids was mid-August, so around now. The MoJ has kept the Council's bid on the table. We await further developments.

John Painter

Secretary, FORA

Goring Gap Local History Society

Like other local history organisations, we have kept going through the pandemic with talks on Zoom and regular monthly e-newsletters. Members had to supply their own glass of wine and nibbles when attending our AGM in July, which in normal years is followed by a party. Instead of the festivities, we followed the formal business with a very enjoyable talk by local film-maker and photographer Nick Brazil on *Literary and artistic footprints of the Thames Valley*. One good thing about holding the AGM on Zoom was that it only took 15 minutes!

However a return to normality is hopefully on the horizon with the easing of Covid restrictions and the committee at its recent open air meeting decided that we would go back to face to face meetings in Goring Village Hall in September. Nonetheless we have renewed our Zoom licence in case circumstances change again. It was also agreed to dip a toe in the water

with organizing trips again and a couple of outings to nearby venues are being arranged for the autumn.

Our annual Journal is in gestation, but the Coronavirus pandemic has had an impact on progress with some of the articles due to libraries and archives being closed until recently. It has been difficult to carry out some of the necessary research as not everything is on the internet. Now they have re-opened, the facilities are restricted which must be as frustrating for the staff as for the user. But even though many documents have not been digitized, archivists can offer an excellent service to the remote researcher by emailing photographs of records. I found that some deeds relating to a Streatley pub were part of a large brewery archive held by the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office. Within 24 hours they had located, filmed and sent copies of the relevant pages to me via a file transfer web site. It was worth every penny of the fee and the staff received my profuse thanks, as I did not wish to travel to see the original documents.

During the various lockdowns, we seem to have received more material for our Society archives than usual, some as a result of ‘decluttering’. Sadly several of our longstanding members have died during the past year and their heirs have kindly given us a range of items. Unfortunately one of the deceased was our archivist, Jenny Emerton, who was also a founder member of the Society, which was set up in 1966. We have a vacancy on our committee as a result, and Jenny will be a hard act to follow. We were given Jenny’s large collection of Goss crested china relating to Goring and Streatley which is a rather different addition to our archives from the usual papers and photos.

Janet Hurst

Secretary, email goringgaphistory@gmail.com

Mills Archive Trust

Introducing the Mills Archive Trust

Founded in 2002, the Mills Archive Trust is the UK’s specialist archive on the history of mills and milling. We care for over 260 collections comprising some 3 million documents and images, all of which are freely available for public inspection, either online or in person.

The mills and millers of Berkshire feature heavily in our collections, such

as in the Brian Eighteen and Ken Major Collections. A quick search for Berkshire in our catalogue turns up 1,584 results, and we have details of all the wind and watermills in the county. We have several books on the mills of Berkshire, such as *Chamberhouse Mill*, by Angela Perkins, and *Berkshire Windmills*, by Guy Blythman. Or you may be interested in the captivating *Diary of Robert Stone*, who became miller of Pangbourne Mill in 1871. Robert Stone (1852-1918)

Now that Covid restrictions have been lifted, you can visit our historic premises, Watlington House, in the heart of Reading to view original documents from our archives, or browse the extensive range of books in our library. If you would like to visit in person, please contact us to make an appointment.

We have always relied on the support of local volunteers, many of whom have gone on to fulfilling jobs using the social and professional skills gained during their time with us. Our volunteer programme earned us the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, presented at a ceremony in Reading Town Hall in 2019. If you would like to volunteer for us, please get in touch using the contact form on our website.

As part of our remit as a research and education charity, we produce a free weekly newsletter on a variety of mill-related topics, from industrial milling to the role of mills in feeding the world, from mill mythology to stories from some of our collections, such as the Rex Wailes Collection. If you would like to receive these fascinating newsletters, please sign up via the website and register your interest; you can unsubscribe at any time.

Jane Freebody

<https://new.millsarchive.org>

Oxfordshire Family History Society

Over the past 12 months, driven by restrictions caused by the pandemic the Society adopted to use Zoom both to keep the Society's business as usual running for Executive and Annual General meetings and to engage our members through on-line talks.

Since June 2020 we have been offering a great variety of talks twice a month which has increased our usual "real" audience numbers, to upwards of 100 and a worldwide catchment area. We regularly see Society members

from US and Australia at our Zoom talks as well as UK members living some distance from Kidlington, Oxon where we hope to restart meetings when we are able. Safe to say though that our wider audience are very keen not to lose the online connections that have been built, therefore we will continue to offer talks over Zoom.

Whilst our face-to-face advisory sessions held largely in Oxfordshire's libraries and the Oxfordshire History Centre had to close down and our annual fair curtailed for both 2020 and 2021 most other activities have continued through the help desk.

Projects to transcribe Parish Registers have continued in volunteers' homes and the Monumental Inscriptions teams have restarted their work in the graveyards of the county.

We have continued to collate, edit and publish the three editions a year of the Oxford Family Historian magazine and at around 150 pages of news and relevant articles the editions are always appreciated by our members.

A new book is due out in late 2021/2022 containing fascinating articles on different aspects of surname families in Oxfordshire – from medieval names to advertising, occupations and religions.

As a future project work is being undertaken to develop a database of records on Oxfordshire people from medieval times which will be available to our members via the recently launched Society website (www.ofhs.uk).

Whilst the Oxfordshire Family History Fair will not be held we are hoping to provide an on-line ZoomFair on the same day that the real Fair would have taken place (always first Saturday in October) and plans are underway to gather virtual stallholders.

Angie Trueman

Project Purley

Meetings between April and June continued on Zoom in what has now become routine.

In April, Dr Simon Wenham spoke about “*More than three men in a boat* – the rise and fall of pleasure boating on the Thames” – a fascinating and well documented talk, particularly for a Thames-side village. In May, Bill King talked to us about the *Home front in World War Two*. This wasn't a

talk about battlefield strategies, or army regiments, or Spitfire pilots. Bill King talked about what happened at home. The rationing, the child evacuees, the organisation of fire fighters, the Land Army, munitions factories and the WVS. And the huge propaganda campaign: ‘Dig for Victory’, ‘Make Do and Mend’, air raid precautions on cigarette cards for children to collect. In June, after our second AGM held on Zoom, we welcomed back Dan Allen of the Victorian Military Society to talk about *Women and the Victorian Army*. Dan’s talk opened up a new angle on the lives of soldiers. It was a hugely interesting talk, if not always comfortable story, on an often overlooked topic, and much appreciated by the audience. We would recommend all three speakers and talks to other groups.

In July, after such a long time of being able to meet only via Zoom, it has been lovely to be able to enjoy some face to face activities over the summer. On Saturday 10th, members enjoyed a walk along the route taken by Purvey’s railway in Purley, in the 1920s and early 1930s. The Purvey family from Pangbourne were blacksmiths who also ran a gravel extraction business. There were two pits in Purley, the one we were to visit by the river, and a second off Beech Road. The gravel extracted was mainly used in road building, but some was used in the construction of Caversham Bridge (opened 1926).

The gravel was transported from the pit by the river to the main road using a narrow gauge railway. The railway itself was probably redundant First World War stock, used during the war to transport ammunition behind the lines, and sold off afterwards. The timing fits for this to have been purchased sometime between 1919 and the early 1920s. When gravel extraction ceased by the river, the pit became a pond for fishing and wildlife, and the track and carriages were sold to Menpes Fruit Farm, on Long Lane, where it was used to transport fruit. Menpes in turn sold it on to Purley Rise Chicken Farm, sometime in the late 1930s or early 1940s. Its use wasn’t quite as successful here as the eggs were probably too light to provide sufficient stability to the carriages and there were apparently continual derailments. Not good news when the cargo is eggs! It was eventually mothballed and, in turn, once again sold on when the contents of Purley Rise Farm were sold at auction in the early 1950s. Quite where it went to next is unknown – but it certainly enjoyed a varied existence in Purley.

Later in July, Project Purley hosted the Rain or Shine Theatre Company when they made a welcome return to The Barn with their adaptation of Oliver Goldsmith's restoration comedy "*She Stoops to Conquer*". Once again we were in for a treat from this highly talented company and enjoyed a cast made up of very familiar regulars and also some new faces. A leaving collection raised £120 for Purley Park Trust.

In August, we had our second summer social, a fish and chips supper replacing our usual annual barbecue as a more Covid-secure alternative. It was a lovely evening with much chatting and catching up over a supper cooked and delivered by Lemon Plaice of Tilehurst.

In September, the society hopes to return to face to face meetings in The Barn. On September 17th, Joy Pibworth will be talking about *Jane Austen's school days in Reading* – her school being located in the former Abbey Gateway. A topical talk, given Reading Abbey celebrates its 900th anniversary this year.

Aside from activities, we are also gearing up for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 and are planning an exhibition and also an afternoon tea and vintage fashion show. Something else to look forward to.

Catherine Sampson

Reading Museum

Reading Museum is now fully open, you no longer need to book to visit, so just pop-in during our regular opening hours. Admission, as always, is free!

See our website for more information at www.readingmuseum.org.uk

Matthew Williams

History of Reading Society

Since the last report, we have enjoyed three talks, via Zoom, which were all well attended, and a visit to a local church in person.

April brought *A Tour of Coley Streets* – a video introduced by Graham Turner and Joe Doak. Coley is a part of Reading between the River Kennet and Castle Street, close to the town centre. It used to be an area of little houses, shops and pubs, brick works, and iron works, a brewery and a railway goods yard, and much of it has now been swept away. The big changes came in the 1960s and 1970s, when the Inner Distribution Road

was built. Fortunately, Doug Noyes was around to record the changing scene, and many of the photographs we saw were taken by him. Our two presenters had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the area, through having lived for a long time in the area, as well as through pictures and documents.

In May, Mike Cooper told us about the role of the *Home Guard in the Second World War*, in Reading and Berkshire. Known at first as the Local Defence Volunteers, they were the country's response to the threat of a German invasion. They were there as a delaying force, should the worst happen, and we heard about physical training, training in the use of weapons, training exercises such as "The Battle of Tilehurst," and anti-tank and anti-aircraft defences. It was all a far cry from the farcical situations met with in the television comedy, hence the title of the talk, *Who Do You Think You Are Kidding, Dad's Army?*

Dr. Gordon Cox had published a book, *Music in Nineteenth-century Reading*, and in June he gave a talk on the *Binfield family and their importance in the musical life of the town*. Through the wonders of technology, we were joined by descendants of the Binfield family in the United States. Richard Binfield arrived in Reading in 1799, and before long was a music teacher, a church organist, and had established a shop selling musical instruments and sheet music in the town centre. He was also an impresario, running a series of music festivals for which he brought in professional musicians from London and elsewhere. Between 1806 and 1846 there were thirteen festivals, some lasting a day, but a few lasting two or three days. John Bilson Binfield, his son, ran the last two festivals. He was a church organist, composer, and teacher. Hannah and Louisa, Richard's daughters, took over the shop. Hannah, with her business partner, Milton Wellings, set up the Royal Berkshire Academy of music in the town. Then eventually, in 1902, the music shop was taken over by one of its competitors, and the firm became Attwells, Binfield and Company.

There was some doubt as to whether the visit to St. Luke's Church could go ahead, but it did, on a sunny July evening. The church had begun as a mission church of St. Giles's, a prefabricated iron building to serve the Redlands area, to the east of and barely a mile from the town centre, where the building of houses was going on apace. The church of brick and stone which followed was designed by J. P. St. Aubyn and consecrated in 1883. We were hoping to visit the church hall, but because of precautions against

coronavirus infection, this was not possible. After a time to look round, and to admire the many stained glass windows in the church, taking care to remain masked and not to touch anything, it was a relief to go out into the open, take off our masks and enjoy the adjacent community garden. The chance to see one another properly and catch up on news was greatly enjoyed, and the Society was grateful to St. Luke's for making the visit possible.

Meetings in the Abbey Baptist Church will resume on September 15, with a talk on *Pubs and breweries in Reading*. The printing of the new book "*Abbot Cook to Zero Degrees: an A to Z of Reading's Pubs and Breweries*," has been delayed through people at the printer's having been told to self-isolate on account of the virus, but we have been assured that copies will be with us by then, and will be on sale on the night. We are hoping to arrange a "launch" at a town centre brewery and bar the week afterwards, and then we'll have copies on sale in the town centre and by post.

The popularity of the "Zoom" meetings has led to the decision to hold meetings in September and October in person, but to hold the December, January and February meetings via Zoom, and from March onwards, to return to the Abbey Baptist Church.

David Cliffe

Saint George's Chapel Archive

I am pleased to advertise details and extend a warm invitation to you, your friends, colleagues, members and customers to the twenty-first Bond Memorial Lecture at St George's Chapel, Windsor. (*see Opportunities* page 24)

St George's Chapel, the grand and impressive royal chapel within Windsor Castle, may be familiar to many of us today as the home of recent royal weddings and funerals, intrinsically linked with the monarchy. But what was life like in the chapel and its resident college 500 years ago?

The years 1460-1520 were a period of resilience and transformation in the history of St George's, which would see the college go from a state of practical bankruptcy to the building of the grand new chapel we see today, in large part due to the efforts and innovations of the collegiate community. In this talk Dr Euan Roger of The National Archives will explore the challenges faced by the late-medieval community at St George's, and the experiences of daily life in a royal college during a period of civil war, epidemic disease and financial uncertainty.

Drawing together unique original records from both the college's own archives and the records of central government and the law courts at The National Archives, Euan will highlight the personal stories of daily life at Windsor and the personalities who lived, prayed and worked within the castle, steering the college through the difficult years of the late fifteenth century and into a brighter future.

I look forward to welcoming you to the Chapel.

Kate McQuillian
Archivist & Chapter Librarian

Shinfield & District Local History Society

Our meetings have continued to be held via Zoom. Our speaker in May was Joan Dils who gave a talk on “*Migration to Reading*”. This was, in effect, a potted history of the town based on the people who had made Reading their home or place of work. People were first attracted to the area by its location with the rivers and surrounding good agricultural land. The Anglo-Saxons gave Reading its name and by Domesday 28 families were recorded. From its foundation in 1121 to dissolution in 1539, Reading Abbey was a major influence on the development of the town. Many newcomers were attracted from surrounding villages and further afield, including overseas. The population grew significantly in the 19th century and many well-known businesses were established, including Simonds (brewers), Suttons (seeds), Huntley and Palmers (biscuits), Heelas (now John Lewis) and Jacksons (clothing store). The population continued to grow in the 20th century with many immigrants, resulting in the present multi-national and multi-religion community.

In June, Dr Margaret Simons gave a talk on “*Huntley and Palmers*” covering the history of this former Reading business from its foundation in 1822 to the closure of the Reading factory in 1977. The company was started by Joseph Huntley who was later joined by his son Thomas. Thomas ran the company until 1841 when he and George Palmer went into partnership to form Huntley and Palmer. The large factory in Kings Road opened in 1846 using mechanised production methods developed by George Palmer. In 1857 George Palmer's brothers joined the company and bought out Huntley but retained the name Huntley and Palmers. The company grew to

become the largest biscuit manufacturer in the world and the largest single employer in Reading. Workers were mainly male and wages were low, however, employees enjoyed a number of benefits and social activities, including excursions and cricket and football teams. During World War 1 the Engineering Department made shells for the military, using women for this work. In World War 2 biscuit production was reduced as a result of rationing. Following mergers with other biscuit manufacturers the Reading factory closed in 1977 and association with the Palmer family ended in 1983.

In July, Richard Poad of the Maidenhead Heritage Centre gave a talk with the intriguing title of “*Are you married or do you live in Maidenhead?*”. This talk covered scandalous events that had occurred over the centuries in the Maidenhead area. Several of these were centred on Cliveden House and dated from the 17th century to the 20th century.

George Taylor

Stanford in the Vale & District Local History Society

During much of the lockdown period, we kept in touch with our members through monthly newsletters. These featured articles drawing on the Society’s extensive newspaper archive and went out under the heading ‘This Month in Stanford Long Ago’. Accounts ranged from the Machine Breaker Riots of 1830 and their aftermath to the scouring of the White Horse at Uffington to the dawn of the age of cycling and cycle clubs.

Now, with the end of formal restrictions, we are returning cautiously to regular monthly meetings from early September. During the coming months, these will be held in larger premises than hitherto in order to permit social distancing. On a note of continuity after the seemingly endless COVID break, we plan to begin with a review of our long-term, ongoing Stanford archaeology project. Our speaker, project leader David Ashby of the University of Winchester, will then move on into an account of recent new work.

Mike Macfarlane

Wargrave Local History Society

Wargrave Local History Society has continued to hold meetings using Zoom during the summer. In May we welcomed highly regarded local historian Catherine Sampson, when she gave her presentation on *Royal Weddings*. She explained that she is an ardent royalist, even though although her talk included various accounts of scandal – the past being far more controversial than anything the media might suggest in more recent years! People normally choose their spouse with care, marrying their soul mate or love partner. However, in time past it was rather different for royal families - the choice of a spouse could be on love, but factors such as pedigree, religious beliefs, political and social allegiances, temperament, looks or the ability to breed were more likely to be considered, whilst the choice of a suitable partner also came to be governed by two Acts of Parliament. Catherine concluded with a selection of pictures of ‘scene stealing by attendants’ at royal weddings, with pages and bridesmaids looking the wrong way, sticking out their tongue, or sharing a joke!

In June Keith LePage (a custodian for the Spencer Gallery in Cookham) spoke about *The life and work of Stanley Spencer*. Keith described Stanley Spencer as “one of the great British painters of the 20th century, who kept very much to his own style”. Born in Cookham, his home education centred on nature walks and Bible stories, which influenced many of his later paintings. - the Bible stories were to be the foundation of a lot of his paintings. He then attended Maidenhead Technical College and the Slade College of Art in London, where he was an unconventional pupil, and his personal life also was rather unorthodox. The Stanley Spencer Gallery in Cookham High Street, is now able to open again daily, during the summer, from 10.30 – 5.30.

In July, Zoom made it possible to hear Bill King tell us about *The Upper Thames Patrol*. Formed in the spring of 1939, the task if war broke out for this 6,000 strong volunteer force was to police the River Thames and look out for attempts to sabotage vital locations, in particular bridges and locks. The area was the 125 miles of navigable river from Teddington Lock to Lechlade, and a mile or so to each side. If the locks had been sabotaged, the uncontrolled rush of water downstream could have led to extensive flooding of the Thames valley area, whilst the bridges were vital for the

movement of supplies and troops. Their meeting places were often riverside inns, so colloquially their initials, UTP, stood for "Up The Pub"!

On a sunny August afternoon, members visited the Reading Abbey quarter, including the recently restored ruins. The Abbey celebrates its 900th anniversary this year, and our guide, John Painter, of the Friends of Reading Abbey showed us what remains, and explained why more survived the dissolution of the monasteries compared to other similar sites elsewhere.

The Society's planned programme is at www.wargravehistory.org.uk/ - where the latest information can be found, or email info@wargravehistory.org.uk to confirm meeting details.

Peter Delaney

The Swing Riots Walk

The BLHA walk along the Kennet and Avon canal from Kintbury to Hungerford in June 2021



The walkers outside St Mary's Church, Kintbury

The Swing Riots of 1830 are a little-known part of 19th century history. They were caused by rural poverty, unemployment and a series of bad winters. The invention of the threshing machine put men out of work in the winter months, and they had to apply for poor relief to feed their families.

The Swing Riots started in Kent in the summer of 1830, which was a year of revolutions in Europe. Agricultural labourers began to smash threshing machines and demand money from farmers and landowners. The protest movement spread across southern counties and reached Berkshire in November. A threatening letter in *The Times* was signed by Captain Swing, but there was no such man. Local groups had their own leaders. In Kintbury, where our walk started, the leader was William Winterbourn.

A group of BLHA members walked along the Kennet and Avon canal from Kintbury to Hungerford, looking at places associated with the Swing Rioters. We started at St Mary's Church in Kintbury, looking also at its connections to Jane Austen. Her sister Cassandra was engaged to Tom Fowle, who died before they could marry. He was the brother of the Reverend Fulwar Craven Fowle who was the vicar of Kintbury at the time of the Swing Riots. We visited the grave of William Winterbourn, who was hanged in Reading Gaol on 11th January 1831 for his part in the uprising, and buried in Kintbury churchyard. We also saw the Blue Ball pub in Kintbury where the farm workers met. They visited farms and country houses breaking machines and demanding £2.00 from each employer. Then they joined with the Hungerford men, and attacked Mr Gibbons' iron foundry and Mr Anning's tannery in Hungerford. A deputation of five men from Hungerford and five from Kintbury met local magistrates and landowners in Hungerford Town Hall and argued their case for better pay.

The government was afraid of revolution and suppressed the Swing Riots using the militia and troops sent from Reading. Local men were arrested, some in the Blue Ball, and sent for trial at special assizes in Reading. Many of them were sentenced to transportation to Botany Bay or Tasmania, some to seven years hard labour, and the Kintbury leader Winterbourn was hanged. An annual commemoration is held every January 11th at his grave.

Ann Smith

Opportunities

For talks, events, exhibitions etc which are open to the public

Resilience and Transformation

7pm on Wednesday 6 October 2021

St George's Chapel Windsor

This year's lecture will be delivered by Dr Euan Roger from The National Archives under the title, *Resilience and Transformation: Community Life at St George's Chapel in the Fifteenth and early-Sixteenth Centuries*. The lecture will take place at 7pm on Wednesday 6 October 2021 in the nave of St George's Chapel, although it is also possible to attend remotely via Zoom. Admission is free but by named ticket only. To apply for a ticket please

write to the Chapter Office, The Cloisters, Windsor Castle, Windsor, SL4 1NJ with a stamped addressed envelope.

The 1971 Reading Festival

Thursday 26 August 2021 – Saturday 29 January 2022 in the Sir John Madejski Gallery, Reading Museum. Admission Free

The 1971 READING FESTIVAL: For the First Time' marks 50 years since the first Reading Festival.

Fittingly launched to coincide with the return of 2021's much anticipated Reading Festival, this fascinating exhibition tells the story of the very first festival in 1971 through rare and unseen photographs, posters, ephemera, and unique items of rock memorabilia.

Reading Museum has enlisted legendary rock photographer Jill Furmanovsky to curate the story. Jill's career has spanned five decades, and she is responsible for some of the most enduring images in popular music history. Jill and her team at RockArchive.com have conducted exhaustive research to bring lost and hidden imagery of the first festival to light, for this not-to-be-missed exhibition. The show will include previously unseen work by some of the most renowned exponents of the art of music photography, including Michael Putland and Ray Stevenson.

The exhibition is narrated by Record Collector magazine's Ian Shirley. With his specialist knowledge of the history of pop music, Ian has delved into the archives and tracked down musicians and fans to share an enlivening account of the first festival. Ian uncovers detail of its arrival in Reading, explores the unfolding of the event (despite the many challenges faced by its organisers) and reflects upon the legacy of the festival on the life and times of Reading in the early 1970s. Ian, with his encyclopaedic knowledge of vinyl, has also curated the music played in the Sir John Madejski Gallery to evoke the sounds of the first festival.

Queen Elizabeth Woodville

Friends of Reading Abbey Autumn Lecture

Saturday 30 October 2021

The illustrated Autumn Lecture will be given by Dr Joanna Laynesmith, Research Fellow at the University of Reading, on Queen Elizabeth Woodv-

ille, whose secret marriage to King Edward IV was made public at Reading Abbey in the autumn of 1464. The Lecture is free, and open to the public. Get this date in your autumn diary.

The Reading Formulary

Brian Kemp Memorial Lecture

26 March 2022

This will be the second Professor Brian Kemp Memorial Lecture organised by the Friends of Reading Abbey. It is in memory of Professor Brian Kemp who died in 2019. It will be held at 2.30pm on Saturday 26 March 2022; and given by Dr Fredrica Teale of the University of Southampton who will talk on the Reading Formulary, the rare Fourteenth Century Abbey manuscript which Brian helped to locate in private hands, and which FORA helped to purchase for the Berkshire Record Office in 2013. Dr Teale has just completed her PhD on the Formulary. Again, this will be a public event, with a venue still to be settled. A date for your new year diary.

Reading Abbey

Saturday 16 October

WEA Day School

Keith Hasted, from the Reading WEA Branch, is running a Day School on Saturday 16 October on Reading Abbey, in recognition of its 900th anniversary this year. This will be held at RISC, in London Street, Reading; the fee is £27.

Provided conditions permit a walking tour of the Abbey site will be included. Founded by Henry in 1121 with monks brought from Cluny in France, Reading Abbey became a magnificent example of Romanesque architecture, and became one of the leading monastic sites in England. After dissolution of the Abbey in 1538 virtually all of the lead, glass and facing stone was removed.

Here is a link to details and enrolment:

<https://enrolonline.wea.org.uk/Online/2021>

The Centre for Heritage and Family History

The following events are organised by the Berkshire Family History Society. Mostly they will be on-line but normally talks are at the Centre which is on the 2nd floor of Reading Central Library. You will need to book so go to the Society's webpages:- <https://berksfhs.org>

Berkshire and the Industrial Revolution

Thursday, 9th September 2-3.15 pm

An on-line talk with Richard Marks

Parish Registers

Saturday, 18th September 11 am-1 pm

An on-line workshop: led by Catherine Sampson

Georgian sources for historians

Friday, 1st October 2-4 pm

Learn more about one of the most transformative periods in British history.
An on line course led by Dr Margaret Simons

(1st of 10 sessions - Subsequent sessions on 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th October, 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th November and 3rd December

DNA Special Interest Group

Saturday, 2nd October 2.30-4.30 pm

An on-line discussion group facilitated by international DNA expert, Debbie Kennett. note: Society members have priority booking for this event. Any remaining tickets on general sale from 20th September.

Beginners' Family History

4th October 10:40 - 12:30

An on-line course led by Chad Hanna and Gillian Stevens

The first of six weekly sessions running from 2.00 to 3.30 pm each week (4th, 11th, 18th and 25th October and 1st & 8th November).

"Smelly Alley", Reading

Thursday, 7th October 2-3.15 pm

An on-line talk by Kevin Little

Writing up your family history

Saturday, 16th October 11-1 pm

A Workshop led by Dr Barry Jerome at The Centre

Getting the most out of UK census records

Wednesday, 20th October 7-9 pm

An on line workshop led by Tony Roberts

Fairmile Hospital

Thursday, 21st October 2-3.15 pm

An on-line talk by Mark Stevens on on Berkshire's county asylum

An introduction to Caribbean Family History

Saturday, 23rd October 3-4.15 pm

An on-line talk by Guy Grannum

The Wilts & Berks Canal

Thursday, 4th November 2-3.15 pm

An on-line talk by Martin Buckland

DNA Testing and family history

Saturday, 6th November 3-4.15 pm

An on-line talk by Debbie Kennett

The Duke of Wellington

Thursday, 18th November 2-3.15

A life of service A talk by Brigadier Michael Aris DL & Richard Bennett DL

The History of Greyfriars Church, Reading

Saturday 4th December 12-1.15 pm

An on-line talk by Malcolm Summers

History Societies

- Aldermaston History Group.** Chris Boott, Kennet, Church Road, Aldermaston RG7 4LR
[blha@aldermastonhistory.uk]
- Arborfield Local History Society,** Secretary Rosemary King [roking@henforyd.plus.com]
[www.arborfieldhistory.org.uk]
- Berkshire Archaeological Society,** Anne Harrison, [secretary@berksarch.co.uk] [www.berksarch.co.uk]
- Berkshire Archaeology Research Group,** Dr Roger Sym, 197 Halls Rd, Reading, RG30 tel
0118 942 7703 [Roger@PsrLtd.Demon.co.uk]
- Berkshire Family History Society,** Centre for Heritage and Family History, 2nd Floor, Reading
Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BQ, [tel 0118 950 9553]
[https://berksfhs.org][secretary@berksfhs.org]
- Berkshire Gardens Trust.** Fiona Hope, 23 St James Close, Pangbourne, RG8 7AP [fiona.hope-
@btinternet.com] [www.berkshiregardenstrust.org]
- Berkshire Industrial Archaeological Group,** Secretary, Graham Smith, 114 Shaw Rd, Newbury
RG14 1HR [secretary@biag.org.uk]
- Berkshire Record Society,** Secretary Margaret Simons, 80 Reeds Ave, Earley, Reading RG6
5SR, [margaretsimons@hotmail.co.uk]
- Blewbury Local History Group,** Audrey Long, Spring Cottage, Church Road, Blewbury, Oxon,
OX11 9PY, tel 01235 850427 [audreyrosettalong@gmail.com]
- Bracknell & District Local Historical Society,** Jane Moss, 31 Huntsman's Meadow, Ascot, SL5
7PF, [MossSandalwood@aol.com]
- Burnham Historians,** Mary Bentley, 38 Conway Road, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 0LD,
tel 01628 665932, [burnhamhistorians@btinternet.com]
- Cox Green Local History Group,** Pat Barlow, 29 Bissley Drive, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 3UX,
tel 01628 823890 weekends only, [alan.barlow@btinternet.com]
- East Garston Local History Society,** Mrs Karen Sperrey, Church Cottage, Front St, East
Garston, Hungerford, RG17 7HJ [karen@kado.cloud]
- East Ilsley Local History Society,** Eric Saxton, School House, Church Hill, East Ilsley RG20 7LP
[info@eastilsleyhistory.com] [www.eastilsleyhistory.com]
- Eton Wick Local History Group,** Teresa Stanton, 35 Eton Wick Road, Eton Wick, Windsor,
SL4 6LU, tel 01753 860591 [teresams35@virginmedia.com] [www.etonwickhistory.co.uk]
- Finchampstead Society,** Mohan Banerji, 3 Tanglewood, Finchampstead, Berks, RG40 3PR, tel
0118 9730479.
- Goring Gap Local History Society,** Janet Hurst, 6 Nun's Acre, Goring on Thames, Reading,
Berks RG8 9BE, tel 01491 871022, mob 07799 583524 [goringgaphistory@gmail.com]
[www.goringgaphistory.org.uk]
- Hanney History Group,** Mrs P J Taylor, Walnut Cottage, Ebbs Lane, East Hanney Oxon, OX12
0HL [07726 842413]
- The History of Reading Society,** Vicki Chesterman, 7 Norman Road, Caversham, Reading RG4
5JN, tel 0118 947 3443, [vickichesterman@yahoo.co.uk] [www.historyofreadingsociety.or-
g.uk]
- Hungerford Historical Association,** Secretary Helen Lockhart, [shelenlockhart@aol.com]
[www.hungerfordvirtualmuseum.co.uk]
- Longworth & District History Society,** Pam Woodward, 22 Cherrytree Close, Southmoor,
Abingdon OX13 5BE. [prwoodward@btinternet.com] Jill Muir, [jill@shotte.plus.com],
[http://www.longworth-history-society.org.uk/]
- Maidenhead Archaeological & Historical Society,** Paul Seddon, 1 vine Cottage, Stubbings
Lane, Maidenhead SL6 6QN [paul@c21networks.co.uk]
- Marcham Society** Simon Blackmore, 2 Walnut Mews, Mill Road, Marcham, Oxon OX13 6NZ
tel 01865 392090 [spblackmore@googlemail.com]

Mid Thames Archaeological & Historical Society, Jane Wall, 143 Vine Road, Stoke Poges, SL2 4DH, [sec.mtahs@yahoo.co.uk]

Mortimer Local History Group, Mrs Janet Munson, The Laurels, Ravensworth Road, Mortimer, RG7 3UD, [munsonsinmortimer@yahoo.co.uk]

Newbury District Field Club, Jane Burrell, Walnut Tree Cottage, Oxford Rd, Donnington, Newbury, RG14 3AG [tel 01635-46497] [secretary@ndfc.org.uk][www.ndfc.org.uk]

Oxfordshire Family History Society, Chairman:Malcolm Austen. Secretary: Angie Trueman c/o Oxfordshire History Centre, St Luke's Church, Temple Road, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2HT, [email: secretary@ofhs.org.uk or chairman@ofhs.org.uk]

Oxfordshire Local History Association Liz Wooley, 138 Marlborough Road, Oxford OX1 4LS [chair@olha.org.uk]

Pangbourne Heritage Group, Jane Rawlins (archivist) Chapel House, Thames Ave, Pangbourne RG8 7BU contact Ellie Thorne [eb_thorne@hotmail.com]

Project Purley, Catherine Sampson, 32 Waterside Drive, Purley on Thames, Berks, RG8 8AQ, tel 0118 9422 255, [secretary@project-purley.eu], [www.project-purley.eu]

Shinfield & District Local History Society, George Taylor, Long Meadow, Part Lane, Swallowfield, Berks, RG7 1TB. tel 0118 988 3580. Reporter George Taylor [george.taylor-29@btinternet.com]

Sonning & Sonning Eye History Society, Heather Kay, 5 Augustfield, Charvil Lane, Sonning, RG4 6AF [kaydenis@googlemail.com]

Stanford in the Vale & District Local History Society, Mike Macfarlane, 53 High St, Stanford in the Vale, Oxon SN7 8NQ [tel 01367 710 358 [mmacfarlane1@btinternet.com]

Swallowfield Local History Society, Ken Hussey, Kimberley, Swallowfield RG7 1QX, tel 0118 988 3650, [www.slhsoc.org.uk]

Tadley and District Local History Society, Carol Stevens, 5 Church Road, Pamber Heath, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 3DP, [tadhistory@googlemail.com] [www.tadshistory.com]

Thatcham Historical Society, Susan Ellis, Open View, New Road Hill, Midgham RG7 5RY [susan.carver@gmx.com] [enquiries@thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk], [www.thatchamhistoricalsociety.org.uk]

Theale Local History Society, Graham Reeves, 52 Parkers Corner, Englefield, RG7 5JR, [thealehistory@btconnect.com]

Twyford & Ruscombe Local History Society, Jean Poulter, 17 Weir Pool Court, Silk Lane, Twyford RG10 9GY, [jeanpoulter@tiscali.co.uk], [www.trlhs.org.uk]

Wargrave Local History Society, Peter Delaney, 6 East View Close, Wargrave, Berks, RG10 8BJ, tel 0118 940 3121, [secretary@wargravehistory.co.uk], [www.wargravehistory.org.uk]

Windsor Local History Group, Anne Taylor, Canon Cottage, Bishops Farm Close, Oakley Green, Windsor SL4 5UN [taylorad22@btinternet.com] [www.windsorhistory.org.uk]

Friends of Windsor and Royal Borough Museum, Len Nash, 27 Bourne Ave, Windsor, SL4 3JP, [www.friendsofwindsormuseum.org.uk]

Would you all please check these entries and let us know of any changes. The entry should show:-

The name, postal address and e-mail address for formal correspondence with the society and optionally a telephone contact number.

Your website url (if you have one)

Optionally the name and e-mail address of the person who will send in reports of your society's activities (if different from official contact)

e-mail changes and corrections to membership@blha.org.uk

Archives, Libraries & Museums

Abingdon Library, The Charter, Abingdon, OX14 3LY, tel 01235 520374
[abingdon_library@yahoo.co.uk]

Allen County Public Library, Genealogy, PO Box 2270, Fort Wayne, Indiana USA, tel 001 468 012270, [www.genealogycenter.org]

Berkshire Record Office, 9 Coley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6AF, tel 0118 901 5132,
[www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk], [arch@reading.gov.uk]

Bracknell Library Local Studies, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1BH, tel 01344 423149
[bracknell.library@bracknell-forest.gov.uk]

Eton College Library, Eton College, Windsor, SL4 6DB, [archivist@etoncollege.org.uk]

Guildhall Library, Serials Assistant, Aldermanbury, London EC2V 7HH, [Andrew.Harvey@cityoflondon.gov.uk], [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/guildhalllibrary]

Hungerford Virtual Museum, – [www.hungerfordvirtualmuseum.co.uk]

Maidenhead Heritage Trust, Fran Edwards, 18 Park Street, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 1SL, tel 01628 780555 [administration@mhc1.demon.co.uk]

Maidenhead & Windsor Local Studies Library, Chris Atkins, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1QU, tel 01628 796981, [chris.atkins@rbwm.gov.uk]

Museum of Berkshire Aviation Mohawk Way Reading RG5 4UE tel 0118 944 8089 [www.museumofberkshireaviation.co.uk]

Newbury Library, Newbury Central Library, The Wharf, Newbury, RG14 5AU, tel 01635 519900 [library@westberks.co.uk]

Oxfordshire History Centre, St Luke's Church, Temple Road, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2HT, tel. 01865 398200, e-mail: oxhist@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Reading Central Library, Local Studies Librarian, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BQ, tel 0118 9015965

Reading Museum Services, The Curator, Town Hall, Blagrove Street, Reading, RG1 1QH, tel 0118 9399800, [www.readingmuseum.org.uk]

Reading University Library, Kate Devaney, PO box 223, Whiteknights, RG6 6AE, tel 0118 378 8785, [k.r.devaney@reading.ac.uk]

The Mills Archive Trust, Jane Freebody, 44 Watlington House, Watlington Street, Reading RG1 4RJ, tel 0118 9502052 [jane.freebody@millsarchive.org]

Museum of English Rural Life: The University of Reading, Redlands Road, Reading, RG1 5EX, tel 0118 378 8660 fax: 0118 378 5632, [merl@reading.ac.uk] [www.merl.org.uk]

The River and Rowing Museum, Mill Mradows, Henley on Thames, RG9 1BF tel 01491 415600 [curatorial@rrm.co.uk]

Windsor & Royal Borough Museum, The Guildhall, Windsor, SL4 1LR, tel 01628 685686, [museum.collections@rbwm.gov.uk], [www.windsor.gov.uk]

Slough Library Local Studies, Slough Library, The Curve, William St, Slough, SL1 1XY, tel 01753 875533, [library@slough.gov.uk] [www.slough.gov.uk/libraries]

Slough Museum, The Curve, William St, Slough, SL1 1XY, tel 01753 875533, [info@sloughmuseum.co.uk]

Wallingford Museum, 52 High St, Wallingford, OX10 0DB, tel 01491 835 065 [www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk]

West Berkshire Museum, The Wharf, Newbury, RG14 4AU, [museum@westberks.gov.uk]

Wokingham Library Local Studies, Denmark Street, Wokingham, RG40 2BB, tel 0118 9781368

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Elias Kupfermann

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Membership

Berkshire Local History Association exists to provide a meeting place for all those interested in the history and heritage of the Royal County of Berkshire. We cover the areas of Berkshire both before and after the 1974 review of local government. We are a registered charity.

We have three classes of membership

Individual - for individuals and couples living at the same address

Family - for families living at the same address

Corporate - for local history societies and institutions, such as libraries, archives and museums

We publish a **Journal** (Berkshire Old and New) once a year containing detailed articles on Berkshire's past - all members get one copy.

We publish a **newsletter** three times a year in January, May and September and you can opt for a hard copy version by post or an electronic version by e-mail.

We send out occasional **e-mail Bulletins** in between Newsletters with the latest news.

We maintain a **Website** to keep you up-to-date with Society activities [www.blha.org.uk]

We hold an **Annual General Meeting** in Spring each year where local societies bring in displays and copies of their publications. The formal meeting is followed by a variety of activities - talks, walks and visits - dependent on where we are. Meetings are held in different parts of the county.

We hold occasional **Seminars, Workshops** and **Day Schools** with eminent speakers

We organise occasional **Day trips** to visit archives or places of interest (usually with privileged access to material)

We award a number of **Prizes** to authors of articles and students at the University of Reading.

We offer **Grants** towards research and **Loans** to assist authors to publish their results.

We work with a variety of organisations to **Protect and document the heritage of Berkshire**

Membership fees

The rates for 2019-2020 are:-

	version of newsletter		no of copies	
	electronic	hard copy	Journal	Newsletter
Individual	£9.00	£12.00	1	1
Family	£9.00	£12.00	1	1
Corporate	£18.00.	£20.00	2	3

A surcharge of £2 will also be levied on those who opt to pay by cheque.

Applications for membership can be made via the website or by contacting the Membership Secretary by e-mail - membership@blha.org.uk

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Next Newsletter

The next Newsletter is due to be published in January 2022.

The DEADLINE for copy is 15th December 2021 - preferably we would like to have it a bit earlier.

We like to hear of your society's activities over the last four months and will publicise future events that are open to the public (but not regular society meetings)

Please address e-mails to newsletter@blha.org.uk but please include BLHA and your society name in the title of the e-mail.